

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED at

St. *Patrick's* Church,

O N

St. *Cæcilia's* Day.

By THOMAS SHERIDAN, D. D.

*Praise him upon the loud cymbals : praise him upon
the high-sounding cymbals. Let every thing that
hath breath, praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord,
Ps. 150. 5, 6.*

*Quis ignorat musicen (ut de hac primum loquar)
jam illis antiquis temporibus non studii modo
verum etiam venerationis habuisse, ut iidem musici
& vates & sapientes judicarentur.
Quintil. Inst. Orat. lib. 1. c. 4.*

D U B L I N :

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T O

THE HONOURABLE

Musical Society,

THE FOLLOWING

SERMON

Is most Humbly DEDICATED by

The AUTHOR.





T O T H E

Reverend, &c.

A Report has come to me from several quarters, that the *sermon*, which I preached in the *Cathedral* of St. *Patrick's*, on last St. *Cecilia's* day, had given offence to many *dissenters*. And, although it is to be supposed that none of their party were of the audience, nor consequently could have received their intelligence, otherwise than at second hand, which must needs make their censure of little weight, yet notwithstanding my Friends have often, and earnestly pressed me to publish the *sermon* in my own defence, which however I shall not determine to do without your approbation, or at least your consent.

I hope you will do me the justice to believe, that no ambition to appear in print, could be any motive in this proceeding; for if the best discourses have been too of-

ten but little regarded from the *pulpit*, how can it be expected that a very indifferent one, which must appear with the prejudice of a powerful party against it, should be read with any success in the *closet*? And I believe booksellers find printed sermons to be the least vendible goods in their Shops, though sometimes with great names prefixed before them.

It was upon these considerations, that I long suspended my obedience to the repeated commands of that numerous, and *honourable society*, lately instituted for the improvement of *musick in churches*, and and other *solemn performances*, 'till I found my reputation so far concerned, that I was accused of delivering *popish doctrines*, and 'till I received a threatening message from a *dissenting teacher*, that if I printed my sermon, he would write an answer against it. If this should happen to be the case, I promise to make no reply, unless the adversary should please to charge me with misquotations, which is not an unfrequent practice among litigious writers.

Perhaps there may be one tolerable reason for publishing a *sermon* upon this subject, that it hath as I think been less exhausted by divines of our church, than most other controverted points, at least in
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my small reading I have not met with any that have been delivered from the pulpit, and yet considering how often, and in how prophane and scandalous a manner, the use of *church musick* hath been ridiculed, and decried by preachers and writers of every sect among us, perhaps an honest endeavour to defend the usefulness of it, would not be unseasonable.

Whether I have maintained any opinions in this sermon, which are not held sound, and orthodox in our own *church*, I appeal to you, and all others who profess her *doctrine*, and who either have heard, or shall read it, to be judges. But whether I have acted prudentially, or as *a child of this world*, is a very different question, which I am not concerned to answer, but leave it to others, who have more expectations, and more effectual ways to succeed in them. I desire the favour of your answer, and I am with due respect

S I R,

Your most obedient,

January, the 25th.
1730.

Humble Servant,

THOMAS SHERIDAN.



To the REVEREND

Dr. *Thomas Sheridan.*

S I R,

I Return your sermon, and have carefully perused it without making any alterations, only I have set marks in the margin, where a few sentences are less correct in the stile, which although of little consequence from the pulpit, yet should be set right before you send the copy to be printed. As to the doctrines it contains, there is no doubt of your being safe enough upon the article of orthodoxy, and it appears by your quotations, that you have read to very good purpose upon the subject. I am no frequent reader of single, flying, occasional sermons, and consequently do not remember to have met with any, where this matter is so fully, and expressly treated.

One thing you are justly conscious of; that you may not probably have taken the properest methods of making your court. You should best know the burden, and how you can bear it. For, I am not
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perfectly certain, that you will receive thanks from ALL YOUR SUPERIORS (I use that word in it's proper meaning) because I did not observe any one of them in the *church* to countenance either the *performance*, or the *preacher*.

The present language is of another kind. *Our brethren, the dissenters, are not to be disoblged; we may serve God without musick; And, why should we offend loyal, true PROTESTANTS,* with bringing it into our *churches*, after the practice of *papists*. It is not improbable, that such topicks as these, in all their changes, may be rung in your ears, by whatever *sorry hand* shall be employed to answer you. And, yet perhaps the wind may come from a different corner, than that from whence you are threatened. The arts of gaining *popularity with dissenters* are no ill, or unusual means to make advantage by. The character of a *healing man* will hardly fail of finding it's reward, nor will at all suffer by the deepest wounds, with the most poisoned weapons given to those, who are so unhappy to differ from principles in fashion.

You offer it as one reason for printing your sermon, that some (as I suppose) poor, illiterate, preaching *Sectary* of the
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Dissenting way threatens you with an answer. This I do not altogether comprehend, unless you design to enter into a *course of controversy*, which I take to be worse than any *course of physick*. But this I suppose ariseth from your putting a greater weight on the wilful, or malicious clamours of a few hot, ignorant people than I do. It is true, you are in no danger of provoking *learning, piety, or wisdom*; but what is a great deal worse, you may provoke *folly, nonsense, mistaken zeal, malice, and interest*.

Therefore, when you thought fit to desire my approbation, you ought to have distinguished, I do not object against your sermon; but I may not approve of your printing it. However I shall not dissuade you, because it may happen, that the sourness of my temper at present, hath a little tinged my judgment.

I am, Sir,

Your most faithful,

January, the 25th.
1730.

Humble Servant.

A. D.



A

SERMON, &c.

Pl. 33. 1. *Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous, for praise is comely for the upright.*

2. *Praise the Lord with harp: Sing unto him with the psaltery, and an instrument of ten strings.*

3. *Sing unto him a new song, play skillfully with a loud noise.*

4. *For the word of the Lord is right: and all his works are done in truth.*

BEFORE I proceed in discoursing upon these words, I must acquaint you, that, upon comparing them with the original, I find they are not translated with such exactness, as the importance of the subject requires, nor indeed so well fitted to my present purpose,

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as they stand in the native words of their inspired Author. For this reason, although I am very unable to transfer the beauty of this text into our own language, yet I presume to undertake it in the best manner I can, which I conceive will be more faithful, and closer to the *Psalmist's* own meaning and intention.

I shall not trouble my hearers, in the tedious style of a commentator with a reference to the several words, as they stand here in the vulgar interpretation, but only offer to you the following translation, which I think will appear more natural, more sublime, and thereby more suitable to the end which the divine composer had in view. As for instance,

1. *Sing with a loud transport, ye righteous in the Lord; for praise is a thing becoming the righteous.*

2. *Celebrate the Lord on the harp, sing to him in concert with an instrument of ten strings.*

3. *Sing to him a new song, be exact in your harmony, striking the strings with jubile.*

4. *For the word of the Lord is exact, and all his works are done according to truth.*

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There are three things in the progress and connection of these verses very well worth our observation.

1. We find a particular invitation to the righteous, that is, to the religious, to join with the highest strain of melody in the praises of God, as being an employment best suited to persons of true devotion, and whose hearts are unfeignedly sincere in the duties of divine service.

2. To raise, and elevate that *melody of the heart*, (as the *Apostle* expresses it) the *Psalmist* prescribes what instruments of musick were best for assisting their voices, to compleat that concert, which was to carry up their praises to him, who is the great author of all harmony.

3. He recommends a new composition of musick, which he requires should be no sudden performance, but according to the strictest rules of harmony, and this, for the reason, which he assigns in the fourth verse.

For the word of the Lord is exact, and all his works are done according to truth. That is to say, The word of the Lord is it self harmonious, and so likewise are all his visible works in the creation, as being compleated in the most ex-

quisite * order, and proportion, which are the very essence of musick.

Having thus far explained my text, I shall proceed, and

1st. Shew, *That musick has, from the beginning of the world, been employed, in the Jewish, and afterwards in the Christian church, to the praise and service of God.*

2dly. *That it has been of very great use to mankind in the Heathen world.*

3dly. *And lastly, I shall lay before you, some of it's best uses and effects in our churches at present.*

1st. Then, to shew, *That musick has from the beginning of the world been employed in the Jewish, and afterwards in the Christian church to the praise and service of God.*

It is highly probable, That God Almighty, who created *Adam* in his own likeness, did at once inspire him with all the knowledge, which human nature is capable of, and at the same time communicate

* It was an opinion of the antients, That the Planets had their several degrees of distance from the Sun in harmonick proportion, which gave rise to that notion, the musick of the spheres. This is now confirmed to be true by our modern and most accurate observers in Astronomy.

nicate to him the exalted science of harmony. otherwise he must have been unfinished, and deficient in one qualification, which has been deemed by the wisest, and best men, in all ages of the world, highly necessary for the praise, and worship of God. If as *Job* tells us, when the *Almighty Creator* had finished this amazing fabrick of the world, the grand choir of heaven joined in praise of the performance, (for he says, *Chap. 38. v. 6. The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy*) we cannot think, when he gave his favourite monarch of this lower world a kingdom, so delightful as paradise, but at the same time he inspired his soul, and tuned his voice to a song of praise, and thanksgiving, in imitation of the celestial host, for placing him in so happy a situation. And for this reason, if he had neglected a form of adoration, so proper, so highly necessary, he would have been guilty of ingratitude to his benefactor, which cannot be supposed of a person, who, before his fall, was adorned with every virtue, that could make him acceptable to God.

In about ^{five} ~~one~~ hundred and thirty years after *Adam's* creation, we read that *Jubal* invented instrumental musick; for he is said,

Gen.

*Gen. c. 4. v. 21. to be the father of all such
as handle the harp and organ, and as it
is very probable he was likewise the in-
ventor of them, we have no room to
doubt, but that he made the first offering
of their harmony to the inspirer, and con-
sequently tuned them to his praise; and
that it had this happy effect, as to be the
parent of piety and devotion, if we but
observe in the last verse of the same Chap-
ter, That men began, then first, to call
upon the name of the Lord. That is to
say, to worship him. Now we all know,
that the oldest form of worship, among
the chosen people of God, was poetry,
songs of praise for any blessing, or delive-
rance, and we see the best singers requi-
red the assistance of instruments, to give
their voices a greater force and sweetness,
as the practice in heaven is described,
where we are told, that in those blessed
Mansions, the whole devotion of the
Cherubim consists in a musical adoration.
Thus we find Moses after the children of
Israel had passed through the red sea sang
this song unto the Lord. Exod. c. 15.
I will sing unto the Lord; for he hath
triumphed gloriously, the horse and his
rider hath he thrown into the sea. And
so it continues to the twentieth verse,
where*

where we read, That *Miriam* the prophetess, the sister of *Aaron*, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women after her. And *Miriam* answered them, *Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously*, which I conceive is as strong an argument as matter of fact can be, That their songs, in praise of God, were accompanied with musical instruments, and that they had a set-form, and manner of composition, fitted to the particular circumstances of the benefits received.

The next instance we have in this way of worship is the song of *Deborah*, and *Barak* for the victory obtained over *Sisera*, where they return thanks unto God, in a most beauteous and pompous manner, for avenging of *Israel*. *Hear O ye kings, give ear, O ye princes, I even I, will sing unto the Lord, I will sing praise to the God of Israel, Judg. c. 5. v. 3.* And although there be no mention made here of any instruments accompanying their voices, we cannot but think, as it was a thing before customary, that they would likewise give all the advantages, and helps to a poem, or song of such elegance, and so truly solemn and sublime. In the like manner we find, That when the daughter of *Jephtha* went to congratulate

late with her father, upon his conquest over the *Ammonites*, there is mention made of her meeting him with timbrels, without any mention of her song. Now, we cannot suppose, That a person of her distinguished innocence, and religion, could neglect a duty of so great importance, when she had such authorities before her for the practice.

To omit several other proofs in favour of this way of worship. *David* appointed choirs, and instruments, to accompany their voices in the church of God, as appears from 2 Chron. c. 29. v. 25. *The Levites were set in the house of the Lord, with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and of Nathan the prophet; for so was the commandment of God by his prophets.* And again, 1 Chron. c. 13. *And David and all Israel played before God, with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets. So likewise c. 16. v. 42. And with them Hemon and Jeduthun with trumpets, and cymbals for those that should make a sound, and with musical*

tal instruments of God. So likewise from his glorious poetick performances, which are sung to this day through the christian world. And, the several kinds of musical titles, which he gives to many of them, proves evidently, That they were intended to be sung with instruments. As for instance, Where we read *Neginoth* at the head of a psalm, by the etimology or literal meaning of the word, it implies that psalm must be accompanied by stringed instruments. Again, *Higgaion* is a musical expression, which signifies the same as the *Italian Piano*, soft and low. And *Shiggaion* denotes a mixture of all harmonick varieties whatsoever. Thus are the other titles in like manner, relating either to some instrument, or mode of Performance. Beside his direction to the chief musician, frequent in the psalms, plainly makes out, That he had a regular choir, with a *praecentor* or master over them. No person ever writ with so much zeal in favour of religious musick as *David* has done, nor has any one been so earnest in recommending it. *Make a joyful noise*, says he, *unto the Lord, make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. Sing unto the Lord with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. With*

trumpets and sound of the cornet, make a joyful noise before the Lord the King. It would take up too much time, to mention the several transports of the *royal psalmist*, in his musical meditations, and the sudden sallies of his harmonious ejaculations in the praises of God, which were beyond question very acceptable to him; who is the great author of all harmony, both before, and since the world began. After him, *Solomon*, who was distinguished for his prodigious knowledge, and wisdom, instituted the greatest choirs, that ever were known in the world, and appointed the greatest number of instruments for divine service, equal to his magnificence in every thing else, to his boundless genius, and vast reach of understanding. For we read that he composed no less than three thousand and five songs.

We cannot have a better proof of the holy spirit's being pleased with this part of our worship, than in the following account which we read in the 5th. chap. of *Chron.* at the latter end. *When the priests lifted up their voices with trumpets, and cymbals, and instruments of musick, and praised the Lord, saying, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.*
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The glory of the Lord had filled the house. That is *God Almighty*, being in a most extraordinary manner delighted with that way of worship, gave them some extraordinary signal of his being more immediately among them.

Let me add one argument more, to prove the continuance of church-musick all along among the *Jews*, and that it was kept up with the strictest regularity, *Philo Judæus, de vit. contemplat.* where he treats of the *Essenes* who were nearest the *Christians* of all the *Jews*, gives us this History of them, *They divide themselves into two choirs in the middle of a chamber, one is composed of men, and the other of women, each party having its leader distinguished for skill, and dignity. Then they sing hymns, to the glory of God, in variety of measures, sometimes in concert, sometimes alternately, and when they have thus delightfully pleased themselves by such interchanges, they unite into one choir, in imitation of the sea, when it met to preserve Moses, and the children of Israel.*

As it is highly probable, that in those early times, people were taught to sing by the help of instruments, (for we read of

no vocal masters) so is it full as probable, that in all their choral symphonies, they would not lay aside those accompaniments, which did not only serve to keep time, and order among them, but likewise added beauty, and melody to their voices.

Having thus far made out the former part of my first proposition, That musick has, from the beginning of the world, been employed in the *Jewish church*, to the praise and service of *God*, I shall endeavour to make out the latter part, and prove this laudable practice to have been likewise continued in every age of the *Christian church*.

Since we do not find one passage in all the new testament, whereby the use of musical instruments is forbidden in the worship of *God*, but that psalm-singing is required of the first *Christians* by *St. Paul* himself, we cannot think, That he would lay aside the church instruments, and say nothing of it, or that an innovation, so very extraordinary, could happen, without alarming the whole church, when things of much less consequence occasioned great divisions and contentions therein. Nor is it to be imagined, that *the Apostle*, who desired all things might
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be done *with decency and order*, should write thus to the *Colossians*, c. 3. v. 16. *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs. And at the same time not expect it of them, that they should worship God, according to the way of their fathers; with that decency, which had always been observed in their choir.*

But to begin as early, as I can find any authority. *Justin Martyr*, who writ his *apology* in the year of Christ 150, says, *That musick sweetens the soul into a fervent desire of what is celebrated in song, which is a plain indication, That instruments were then used in divine service; for no songs were practised among the primitive Christians, but such as tended to the praise, and glory of God; so says St. Austin, in his 17 ep. to Marcellus. Turn to what point you please, you will hear nothing in Christian villages but psalms. The husband-man, as he holds his plow, sings Hallelujah. The mower, as he sweats with toil, finds a refreshment in singing psalms. The vine-pruner in the field singeth something of David's composition. And, if*
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in the midst of labour and motion, those early *Christians*, even of the meanest rank, could lighten their work by praising *God* with their voices, who can doubt, that in hours of leisure, and particularly upon the *Lord's-day*, they assisted their voices with such instruments, as were then in use; neither is this a meer conjecture, for I shall quickly prove, that the fact was so.

By an authority somewhat later, *Eusebius* in his ecclesiastical history proves from *Dionysius*, That a person, whose name was *Nepos*, had composed certain hymns, which were a long time used in the church. Now, *Christianity* being in the time of *Dionysius* 260 years standing, we may very reasonably conclude his meaning by the words *a long time ago*, must, in the compass of so few years, carry us back very near to the *Apostles* time. *Bellarmin* goes still farther, and mentions one *Hierotheus*, who writ before *Nepos*, the greatest doctor of the church, next to the *Apostles*, so *Dionysius* has it, in his ecclesiastical hierarchy, wherein he makes *Hierotheus* contemporary with *Peter* and *James*. I do not mention *Bellarmin* out of any regard to his own opinions,

nions, but as he quotes an ancient writer, whose works are now extant, and so far I have a regard to him as he makes for my present purpose, by giving authority much rather to be depended upon than his own. I must likewise have recourse to some few more adversaries of our church for their assistance upon this occasion. Even *John Calvin* himself, the head and founder of our dissenters here at home, who although he be not over orthodox in every point of divinity, yet his comments on the scripture are allowed, generally speaking, to contain much learning and sound judgment; in his annotations upon the 14th. chap. of *St. Paul's* 1st. Ep. to the *Corinthians*, v. 15. says * I do not doubt but the primitive *Christians* followed the custom of the *Jews*, in their psalms, which we all know were constantly accompanied with instruments. And again in his remarks upon the 3d. chap. v. 16. of his Ep. to the *Colossians*,

* Ex hoc tamen loco simul colligimus, jam tunc canendi morem fuisse usitatum inter fideles: quod etiam ex *Plinio* constat, qui saltem quadraginta annis post mortem *Pauli* aut circiter; *Christianos* scribit solitos fuisse canere antelucanos hymnos *Christo*. Nec vero mihi dubium est, quin ritum *Judaicae Ecclesiae*, statim ab initio, in psalmis fuerint imitati.

Iossians, he defines a psalm * to be that wherein some musickal instrument beside the tongue is introduced. One of his followers *Zanchius* upon *Eph. 5. v. 19.* says, The use of this musick is manifold and great. 1. That the glory of God is rendred more illustrious and august. 2. The soul of a man is very surprizingly affected by it's force. 3. Our hearts are enlivened and made more cheerful by musick. 4. It stirreth up the Grace of God within us. The same is the opinion of *Diodati* and several later *Calvinists*. And among others I hope it will give no offence to bring in *Martin Luther*, I will confess that I cannot but respect his memory, as he is so sincere an advocate for church-musick. His words are these in an ep. quoted by *Sethus Calvinus* † *We know that musick is hateful and intolerable to the devil, and his angels, nor am I ashamed to confess, that next to divinity, no other science*

* *Psalmus sit in quo concinendo adhibetur musicum aliquod instrumentum præter linguam.* Let any one who has a mind to be farther informed, as to the great regard which this author had for church musick in the service of God read what he says in his 86th. sermon on the book of *Job*, and his comment upon the prophet *Amos. c. 6. v. 5.*

† *Scimus musicam etiam demonibus inuisam & intolerabilem esse plane iudico, nec pudet asserere, post theologiam esse nullam artem quæ possit musica æquari, Ep ad Senfelin. Music.*

ence can equal it. But to proceed in my design, which is to prove the uninterrupted continuance of instrumental and vocal musick through every age since the church of *Christ* began. The next century after *Dionysius*, before-mentioned in the Year of our Lord 306. the first christian emperor ordered *instrumental musick* in his churches. It is true that *St. Athanasius* in the fourth century abolished, and silenced several choirs, which was not from a dislike of *musick*, but occasioned by a fantastical levity in the composers, who introduced a style, rather to gratify the ears, than elevate the soul to heavenly meditation. *St. Austin*, about the beginning of the fourth century, says, in his treatise of confession, That *musick is a gift sent us down from heaven*, and who can imagine, (since this was his opinion) that it was not employed to heavenly uses. And that divine poet * *Aurelius Prudentius*, who lived in the same age, in his *Apotheosis* against the *Jews*, exhorts the
D people

* *Quicquid in are cavo reboans tuba curva remugit,
 Quicquid in arcano vomit ingens spiritus haustu,
 Quicquid casta chelys, quicquid testudo resultat,
 Organa disparibus calamis quod consona miscent,
 Emula pastorum quod reddunt vocibus antra,
 Christum concelebre, Christum sonet, omnia Christum,
 Musa etiam fidibus sanctis animata loquantur.*

people to praise our Saviour with the sound of *Sackbuts, Trumpets, Theorboes, Lutes,* and the *Organ*, which would have been very impertinent in his poem, if they had not been all made use of to accompany their *christian* choirs. *Gelasius* bishop of *Rome* in the year 449 had it very much improved in his church. *Gregory* the great, in the latter end of the fifth century, composed *Antiphons* for day and night; and so very industrious was he to propagate this heavenly science; that *Joa-nes Diaconus*, who writ his life, says, He erected a school at *Rome* for church-musick, and taught in it himself. The celebrated *Cassiodorus*, * *St. Isidore*, and venerable *Beda* writ very high encomiums upon it, the last of these three mentioned in his 4th. book, 18th. c. says, it was introduced in *England*, by command of *Agatho*, bishop of *Rome*, in the year of *Christ* 680. *Platina*, who writes the lives of the popes, says, that under the pontificate of *Vitalianus* in the year of our Lord 660, the use of the organ was then established, although introduced

* *St. Isidore* appointed in the choirs of his time a *pracentor*, *succentor*, *incentor*, & *accentor*.

introduced into the christian church above
 300 years before. In the year 753.
Etienus the pope perswaded king *Pepin*
 of *France* to receive the *Gregorian* chant.
 In the year 789. *Charles the great* ordered
 his son, by an edict, to do the same. In
 the year 831 *Louis the debonair* of
France, not satisfied with the musick,
 which his father instituted, sent *Fortuna-*
tus bishop of *Treves* to *Rome*, in the
 time of *Gregory* the 4th, to correct the
 new *Antiphone* of *France*, which was
 done with good success. The famous
Benedictin monk Guy d' Arrezo added
 many improvements to this musick in the
 11th. Cent. But in about 400 years after
 him the popes of the family of *Medicis*
 brought in a kind of church-musick
 too delicate and soft, of which cardinal
Sadolet, secretary to *Leo* the tenth,
 complains, saying, That by their
 broken repetitions, the full and sonorous
 melody of the church was quite enerva-
 red. Soon after this, pope *Pius* being scan-
 dalized at the trifling compositions of his
 time. had a design to throw it intirely
 out of the church, and resolved to lay his
 reasons for it before the council of *Trent*,
 at which time *Joannes Prænestinus*, who
 was head of his choir, by composing a

grave and solemn piece of *musick*, made him alter his resolution. Thus it continued to the reformation, and has been practised ever since, not only in the *church of England*, which is the glory of that happy change, but in the *Calvinist* and *Lutheran churches* abroad, and God be praised does even so to this day, however some *christian Thracians* among us, are for breaking the strings of *David's harp*, and pulling down our *organ*, although at the same time they keep up *psalm-singing* in their *conventicles*, for no other visible reason, but because the one is the appointment of the *church*, and the other is a creature of their own; preferring their untuned voices to the regular methods of a decent choir, whereas there is as much difference between the one, and the other, as there is between the most dissonant noises, and the most celebrated regular musick.

I come now to shew you in the 2d. place, *That musick hath been of very great use to mankind in the heathen-world.*

It is a very good remark of the great doctor *Stillington*, in his *Origines Sacrae*, That *God Almighty dispensed with an idolatrous way of worship among the heathens,*

heathens, rather than have no worship at all, to keep their souls awake, that they might be better prepared to receive the true religion, when it should be revealed unto them. So likewise did he inspire them with an extraordinary gift of musick, infomuch that the poets and wits among them carried it into fable and fiction. Such as, *The course of rivers being stopped by it's power-- rocks and trees dancing after it-- stones mounting into the regular order of town-walls--- a cessation of punishments among the damned-- furies disarmed, and the like.* But as for the power ascribed to musick of * quelling seditions in a state, † of curing many diseases of the body, and most of the mind, I cannot but agree with the opinion of many wise men in all ages, that such
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* Plutarch tells us, That Terpander was sent for to Lesbos, to quell a sedition at Lacedæmon by the musick of his harp, which accordingly was done by him.

† Ita denique omnis habitus animæ cantibus gubernatur, ut et ad bellum progressui, & item receptui canatur cantu, et excitante, et rursus sedans virtutem; dat somnos adimitque, nec non curaset immittit, et retrahit; iram suggerit, clementiam suadet, corporum quoq; morbis medetur. Nam hinc quod agris remedia prestantes, pracinere dicuntur *** jure igitur musicâ capitur omne quod vivit; quia celestis anima qua animatur universitas, origines sumpsit ex musicâ. Macrobius in somn. Scip. vide Bagliv. de Tarantul.

operations may be performed by the force of this art, without a miracle, whatever those may think, who are so unhappy, to be born without an ear to conceive it.

The *hymns* to the heathen Gods, especially those written by *Orpheus*, and *Callimachus*, next to the poetry of *sacred writ*, are the most sublime compositions we meet. And what were those intended for, but to fill the minds of their religious congregations with the highest rapture of devotion, being all adapted both to voices and instruments.

The ancient *philosophers* observed, That *musick was the wise disposition of providence, who brought voices, and instruments to a perfection equal to other sciences, as a remedy to cure the evils of the soul, because by reason of it's subtilty, and harmony, it approacheth very near the nature of a spiritual being it self.* This made the *Greeks*, who were taught by the *Persian Magi*, improve it to such a degree, That they used it as a medicinal amusement, to appease the perturbations of the mind, and after this excite the soul to virtue. Hence it was in their *Tragedies*, they contrived songs for complaint and joy, with so much skill, as to turn the hearts of the spectators to the most refined moral

moral reflections. This made *Plato* say; *We should not believe that God has given us the knowledge of music only to gratify the senses, but rather to be a rule of government to mankind, to still their unruly passions, and to correct the irregularities of the soul.* The sages of old, after him, employed this excellent gift, in singing songs of praise to the great creator of the universe, to kindle in them pure devotion, and likewise by this in a lower degree, they celebrated the * actions of *heroes*, to animate their young men to a noble emulation of their great and illustrious achievements. And they had so great and sacred a regard to it, particularly the *Egyptians* and *Jews*, That they would not allow it to any prophane use, because they thought it a divine science. †

Hence

* *Vestigia autem Pythagoræorum, quanquam multa colligi possunt, paucis tamen utemur, quoniam non id agitur hoc tempore; nam cum carminibus soliti illi esse dicantur, et præcepta quadam occultius tradere, et mentes suas a cogitationum, cantu fidibusq; ad tranquillitatem traducere, gravissimus autor in originibus dixit Cato, morem apud majoris hunc epularum fuisse, ut deinceps qui accubarent, canerent ad tibia clarorum virorum laudes, et cantus tum fuisse rescriptos vocum sonis et carmina. Cic. Tusc. quest. lib. 4. §. 2.*

† *Summam eruditionem Græci sitam esse censebant in nervorum, vocumq; cantibus, igitur Epaminondas princeps, meo iudicio Græciæ, fidibus præclare cecimisse dicitur; Themistoclesq; aliquot ante annos, cum in epulis recusaret lyram, habitus est in-*

Hence it was made the study of the greatest and wisest men among them, and it was deemed a scandal to be ignorant of a branch of learning so necessary. This made the *Greeks* count it a part of * their *encyclopedia*, or circle of learning. Their oldest poets and historians inform us, That *Mercury*, *Hermes*, *Trismegistus*, *Amphion*, *Zoroaster*, and *Pythagoras* civilized the savage part of mankind by the magical operation of musick. But the greatest among the heathen philosophers, I mean *Aristotle*, in the 8th. book of his republick, after saying much in its favour, and how necessary it was in the promotion of virtue, does earnestly recommend, That the young men of his time should be instructed chiefly in the *Dorian musick*, which was a grave and solemn kind of harmony then in repute. And so high is the compliment paid it by *Strabo* in his 10th. book, That he says the sweetness of musick unites us to *God*; for, says he,
Plato

indoctior. Ergo in Grecia musei floruerunt, discebantque id omnes, nec qui nesciebat, satis ex cultus doctrina putabatur. Cic. Tusc. quest. de contemnenda morte. §. 2.

* Nunc de ceteris artibus, quibus instituendos, prius quam tradantur Rhetori, pueros existimo, strictim subjungam, ut efficiatur orbis ille doctrina, quam Græci *ἐγκυκλοπαιδεία*, vocant. Quintil. lib. 1. chap. 10.

Plato and the *Pythagoreans* before him, gave *musick*, the name of philosophy, supposing the world to be made according to the rules of harmony, and therefore the work of God. I could enlarge much more upon its great use in the *heathen* world, and bring numberless encomiums from ancient writers upon its force, and energy, but that I should trespass too far upon the patience of my hearers. And therefore I shall now speak to the third thing that I proposed, which was,

To lay before you some of its best uses, and effects in our churches at present.

The first use which occurs to me, is, that, during this part of our divine service, it disengages the mind from all worldly anxiety, and perturbation whatsoever, and of consequence renders the soul more free, and active, in the worship of *Almighty God*; for it can never soar aloft to the regions of bliss, while it is encumbered and loaded, except the thoughts be diverted from dwelling upon the cares of life. It is for this reason the *Apostle* says, *I say unto you rejoyce*, well knowing, That a sorrowful heart has a tendency rather to despair than hope. And, what is there in this life, that can command the springs of the heart, and fill them with that heaven-

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ly passion of joy, equal to the unaccountable power of *musick*. When we are in this condition, *we serve the lord with gladness*, and do more immediately come before his presence, we seem to be in concert with the joys above. Thus we begin heaven before-hand, and nothing below it can give us so just a representation of its happiness.

We cannot have a stronger argument to convince us how necessary musick is to prepare us before we come into the presence of God, than in the case of *Elisha*. When he was consulted by *Jehoram*, a wicked king, who in time of peace always sought the prophets of *Baal*, but never went near the prophets of the lord, only as he was forced by necessity. Ifay when he consulted *Elisha*, how he might get water for his army, he said in this manner to him, *What have I to do with thee? get thee to the prophets of thy father and mother*. Upon his farther importunity, and good *Jehosaphat's* joining in the request, he became more complying, and proceeded thus, *As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, surely were it not that I regard the presence of Jehosaphat, the king of Judah, I would not look towards thee*. Yet notwithstanding this (as some *Hebrew* commentators
rightly

rightly remark) he was not yet qualified to help them, as not having the *Shekina*. That is, *the immediate operation of the holy spirit* to inspire him, and to expel those disturbances of mind, which might interpose between him and God. And therefore he says after, *But now bring me hither a minstrel. And it came to pass that when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him, and he said, Thus saith the Lord.* That is to say he prophesied. Whence we may conclude, That instrumental musick is a very great help to devotion, and worthy of *the holy ghost* for it's author, since it is so powerful in preparing the soul for the contemplation of heavenly things, and that God himself has given it a sanction by his approbation of it, in this place, with so visible a mark of his presence.

The next use of church musick is, That, during the time of it's solemnity, the soul is defended from the intrusion of all wicked thoughts, and so long a person is more innocent, and consequently in a better way to offer up his praises, or petitions to *Almighty God*. And to prove the matter of fact to be so, we cannot have it in a plainer instance,

than *David's* driving the evil spirit out of *Saul* by a tune of his harp.

3dly. It brings several persons into the house of *God*, who would otherwise pass it by with indifference, and without its help be entirely unaffected with the best part of our divine service. But when they find that *he who hath made the ear*, has likewise ordained an entertainment so delightful, it must of course carry their thoughts higher, and strike them with a religious awe and veneration for that *Great Being*, who does such wonders among the children of men.

4thly. It enlightens the understanding, and raises the thoughts of heaven in a much more lively manner within us, than the power of words alone can do, for which I appeal to every one, who hears me, Whether the reading, or hearing of an *Anthem* read, without a melodious voice and instruments, could in the least bring them to that warmth and zeal of devotion, which is kindled in their hearts by the other method. But indeed I would here be understood, That such *Anthems* alone can have this good effect in us, which are set to musical notes by men of good skill, and understanding, who still preserve the the proper accent, and cadence, and senti-

sentiments of the divine poet, by adapting proper sounds to them, such as are suitable to the gravity, the solemnity, and the dignity of the scriptures, and not such fantastical strains, as we frequently meet with, in some persons compositions, that the *musick* is rather fitted to some ludicrous entertainment. It requires great judgment, and delicacy in the composer, to know, what sounds are best becoming such and such ideas, when expressed; what syllables and words can best bear the ornament of musical graces; and in the next place, which are of most consequence for frequent repetition; for if the repeated phrases be trite, and of little importance, so far they rather provoke our disdain, than exalt our devotion.

There is another failing likewise in our musical service, which goes by the name of *voluntaries*. That is, What the *organist* pleases to run off his fingers, without any regard, Whether melody or harmony be in it; nothing but a discomposed rhapsody of his own raving imagination, which must be highly offensive to any person, who has judgment enough to be tormented with it's faults. And how far it may be offensive to *God and angels*, I will not take upon
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me to determine, but I am apt to think, the ruin of harmony cannot be pleasing to it's author. It is too like *ex tempore* prayer, and that is saying enough. What assurance is this, to come before the presence of God so unprepared? When the *Seraphim* of heaven singing their *holy, holy, holy lord God of hosts* approach'd him with so much humility, That *with two wings they covered their faces, and with the other two their feet, and only flew with the remaining pair.* This evil might be very easily remedied by playing some grave pieces of the best masters, as there are now extant a great number of *Adagios*, or solemn strains in the works of the most celebrated musicians. But to conclude, and leave the best impression I can to recommend this excellent institution of *church-musick*, Let me bring in St. *John* as an advocate, who, next to our *Saviour*, saw more into heaven than any other person. We read in the 5th. chap. v. 8. of his *Revelations.* *The four and twenty elders fell down before the lamb having every one their harps.* And again, chap. 14. v. 2. 3. *When the lamb appeared on mount Sion. An hundred and forty and four*

four thousand, which follow the lamb where-ever he goeth, I heard, saith St. John, the voice of harpers harping with their harps.

To conclude all, there is no man, without being a professed enemy to heaven can desire to exclude musick from our worship, a science even in the *beathen world*; when applied to religious use, of so great benefit to mankind. And now to sum up it's properties---It makes grief pleasant, and disarms fury, and rage; It makes cruelty kind; Gives activity to sloth; Ease to the mind; and composure to every disorderly passion. It is the voice of the spouse of the Son of God; the harmony of the church; the parent of modesty; the companion of temperance; the promoter of virtue. But above all it gives wings to the religious soul, and hastens it's flight to heaven. And, This may be said particularly for it's honour, That it is to be employed in raising all the dead, since the world began; for *the trumpet shall sound, and then the dead shall be raised*; That, as it has been older than all other sciences, and even before the world began, so shall it continue after it, when all this frame about us is become one universal blank, and no other art or science in being.

ing. Then is it to be no less than one of the joys of that happy region, where neither jars, nor discord can interrupt it's harmony. To which happy state may God, of his infinite mercy, bring us all. *To whom be ascribed all power, might, majesty and dominion, both now, and for ever.*

F I N I S.



